

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 LA PAZ 06943 261333Z  
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11  
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AMEMBASSY QUITO  
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO  
DIA WASHDC  
USCINCSO J2 QUARRY HEIGHTS CZ

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E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, BL  
SUBJECT: OPPOSITION DEMANDS ELECTION BY FIRST HALF OF 1979

1. SUMMARY. IN A JOINT COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AUGUST 23, BOLIVIA'S MAJOR OPPOSITION GROUPS DEMAND THAT GENERAL ELECTIONS BE HELD BEFORE THE END OF THE FIRST HALF OF 1979, AND GIVE THE PEREDA GOVERNMENT 15 DAYS (I.E., UNTIL SEPTEMBER 7) TO ANNOUNCE A DATE. THEY ALSO INSIST ON REFORM OF THE ELECTORAL LAW AND INCREASED OPPOSITION REPRESENTATION ON THE ELECTORAL COURT. HOWEVER, THEY DO NOT FAVOR THE CREATION OF A SPECIAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION, AND RECOMMEND THAT ANY EFFORT TO ELABORATE A STATUTE GOVERNING POLITICAL PARTY ORGANIZATION BE DEFERRED FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE NEW CONGRESS. END SUMMARY.

2. THE COMMUNIQUE WAS SIGNED BY REPRESENTATIVES OF HERNAN SILES', UDP, VICTOR PAZ STENSSORO'S MNR-PRA ALLIANCE, RENE BERNAL'S PDC, AND THE RELATIVELY INSIGNIFICANT EXTREME-LEFTIST FRI, WHICH SUPPORTED THE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDACY OF CASIANO AMURRIO. IT  
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PAGE 02 LA PAZ 06943 261333Z

LEADS OFF BY DEMANDING THAT ELECTIONS BE ANNOUNCED WITHIN 15 DAYS. AFTER EXPLAINING THAT MOST OF THE SIGNING PARTIES HAD PREVIOUSLY INSISTED ON AN ELECTION DATE WITHIN SIX MONTHS, IT STATES THAT THE "INTERESTS OF THE NATION" NOW REQUIRE AN EXTENSION OF THIS DEADLINE TO THE FIRST SEMESTER OF 1979. A FURTHER MODIFICATION, HOWEVER, CANNOT BE A "MATTER OF NEGOTIATION.Z

3. IN ADDITION, THE OPPOSITION GROUPS INSIST ON CHANGING THE ELECTORAL LAW TO RESTORE THE SINGLE-SHEET, MULTI-COLOR, MULTI-INSIGNIA BALLOT AND THE SYSTEM OF PROPORTIONAL CONGRESSIONAL REPRESENTATION (I.E., BY PERCENTAGE OF THE VOTE). THEY ALSO CALLFOR ABROATION OF THE PROVISION WHICH PROHIBITS LABOR LEADERS FROM RUNNING FOR PUBLIC OFFICE. AS FOR THE COMPOSITION OF THE NATIONAL ELECTORAL COURT, THEY REQUEST THAT THE PREPRE-SENTATION RESERVED FOR THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH BE CEDED TO THE SIGNING PARTIES, "WHICH RECEIVED THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGE OF THE VOTE" ON JULY 9. THIS PROCEDURE, THEY STIPULATE, SHOULD ALSO BE ADOPTED IN THE DEPARTMENTAL ELECTORAL COURTS.

4. TO EFFECT THESE CHANGES, THE COMMUNIQUE CONTINUES, IT IS NOT NECESSARY TO CREAT A SPECIAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION, WHICH WOULD ONLY PROVOKE "CONFUSION AND DISTRUST" AMONG THE POLITICAL PARTIES. ALL THAT IS NEED IS AN ENABLING "LEGAL DISPOSITION." AS REGARDS THE GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSAL TO ELABORATE PARAMETERS FOR POLITICAL PARTY ORGANIZATION (WHICH WOULD ESTABLISH MINIMUM MENBERSHIP LEVELS FOR ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION), THE COMMUNIQUE ARGUES THAT HIS WOULD BE BOTH POLITICALLY "INCON-VENIENT" AND CONSTITUTIONALLY "IMPROPER,Z AND THEREFORE SHOULD BE DEFERRED FOR CONSIDERATION BY AN ELECTED CONGRESS.

5. COMMENT: WE UNDERSTAND FROM A GOOD SOURCE THAT THE UDP'S DECISION TO DROP ITS DEMAND FOR ELECTIONS BEFORE THE END OF THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 LA PAZ 06943 261333Z

YEAR WAS MADE WITHOUT CONSULTING SILES, WHO IS CURRENTLY IN CARACAS. THE UDP DECIDED TO JOIN THE MNR-ORA ALLIANCE, THE PDC AND FRI IN CALLING FOR ELECTIONS BY THE FIRST SEMESTER OF 1979 BECAUSE IT RECOGNIZED THAT ITS PREVIOUS DEADLINE, WHICH SILES STRONGLY ADVOCATED, WAS UNFEASIBLE. MORE-OVER, ACCORDING TO THE SOURCE, IF THE UDP HAD REFUSED TO SIGN THE COMMUNIQUE, IT WOULD HAVE RISKED BEING ISOLATED POLITICALLY FROM THE OTHER STRONG OPPOSITION CURRENTS. THE SOURCE ADDED THAT SILES WAS BOUND TO BE SURPRISED AND UPSET BY THE UDP MOVE, BUT BELIEVED THAT HE WOULD ULTIMATELY HAVE TO GO ALONG WITH IT.

6. BY ISSUING THEIR JOINT COMMUNIQUE, THE MAJOR OPPOSITION GROUPS HAVE DEMONSTRATED A MEASURE OF FLEXIBILITY AND COHESIVENESS WHICH THEY HAVE HITHERTO LACKED. EQUALLY SIGNIFICANT, THEY HAVE SEIZED THE INITIATIVE, AND PLACED PEREDA IN THE POSITION OF HAVING TO COME UP WITH A CONSTRUCTIVE RESPONSE.  
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## Message Attributes

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**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** ELECTIONS, OPPOSITION PARTIES  
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**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
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**Executive Order:** N/A  
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